WELSH BOARD OF HEALTH.
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REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year 1957

<u>Officials</u>. Medical Officer of Health...T.C.R.George, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector...W.J.Rees, Sanitary Inspector's Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspector's Examination Joint Board; Meat and Other Foods Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute, Diploma of the Royal Institute of Public Health and Hygiene.

Additional Public Health Inspector..R.Taylor, M.P.H.I.A., M.R.I.P.H.H.

BRECKNOCK RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of the Medical Officer of Health

1957

Mr.Chairman,Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my report on the sanitary conditions and the state of the public health in the Brecknock Rural District during the year 1957.

In this report I have endeavoured to deal briefly with all matters within my responsibility with regard to public health and preventive medicine and I have included comments on all matters specifically requested in Circular 1/1958(Wales) by the Welsh Board of Health.

Section 1.General and Vital Statistics.

Area. 189,532 acres.

The Rural District of Brecknock,which has an area of 189,532 acres is a large district in the County of Breconshire.It is situated mainly in the northern part of the County and consists of rather more than one third of the total size of the County.

The district is agricultural in nature and farming is the predominant occupation of the inhabitants.It contains a new National Park consisting of the Brecon Beacons and surrounding countryside.

There are no large towns in the area and the administrative offices are situated in the Borough of Brecon.

Population. Census 1931.....8302.
Census 1951.....7430.
Estimated Mid-summer 1957...7430.

The Registrar General's estimated population for each of the last ten years are shown below.

1948.	1949.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.	1954.	1955.	1956.	1957.
7113.	7042.	7178.	7338.	7432.	7464.	7480.	7490.	7440.	7430,

The population dropped between the last two census years but during the last ten years again shows a general slight tendency to rise.

Inhabited Houses.The number of inhabited houses was 2331 giving an average number of persons per house of 3.2.

Live Births.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate per 1000 Pop.
Legitimate	50	55	105	
Illegitimate	2	4	6	
	52	59	111	14.9

The corresponding rate for the whole of England and Wales was 16.1. The district rate was therefore lower than the national average but higher than the district deathrate,which is a satisfactory feature.

Illegitimacy.The number of illegitimate births registered during the year was six.

Still Births.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate per 1000 live&still births
	0	2	2	17.6

The corresponding rate for the whole of England and Wales was 22.4. The district rate was therefore lower than the national average.

Deaths.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate per 1000 Pop.
	48	31	79	10.6

The corresponding rate for the whole of England and Wales was 11.5. The district rate was therefore lower than the national average and also lower than the district birthrate.

Maternal Deaths. There were no deaths registered during the year which could be attributed to childbirth. This was a very satisfactory feature.

Infantile Mortality. This is the number of deaths occurring in children of under one year of age.

Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate per 1000 live births
1	0	1	9.0

The corresponding rate for the whole of England and Wales was 23.0. The district rate was therefore lower than the national average. This child died when under 4 weeks of age.

Deaths from Special Causes.

Infectious Disease.....Nil.
Respiratory tuberculosis.....One.
Other forms tuberculosis.....Nil.
Cancer.....14.

Analysis of Causes of Deaths. Males...48. Females...31.

	Males.	Females.
Tuberculosis, respiratory	1	0.
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	4	0.
Malignant neoplasm, lung	1	0.
Malignant neoplasm, breast	0	3.
Other malignant neoplasms	6	0.
Leukaemia	0	1.
Diabetes	0	1.
Vascular lesions, nervous system	7	8.
Coronary disease	4	4.
Other heart disease	10	11.
Other circulatory disease	4	1.
Pneumonia	1	0.
Bronchitis	1	0.
Ulcer Stomach	1	0.
Nephritis	0	1.
Congenital malformations	1	0.
Other causes	3	0.
Motor vehicle accidents	3	0.
Other accidents	1	0.
Suicide	0	1.

The deaths are classified under the headings given in the new Abridged List of Causes of Deaths.

Section 2. General Provisions of Health Services.

Public Health Officers. There was no change in your Public Health Officers during the year. Mr. W. J. Rees remained as your Chief Public Health Inspector and Mr. R. Taylor as your Additional Public Health Inspector.

Laboratory Facilities. During the year laboratory facilities were available at Cardiff, Newport, Carmarthen, Swansea, Aberystwyth and Brecon. Water samples were sent to the Public Health Laboratory at Carmarthen, whilst any investigation required in the control of infectious disease was performed by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff. All the milk sampling including milk examined for the presence of tuberculosis was done by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff.

Nursing Facilities etc. The County Council are responsible for the provision of ambulance facilities, home nursing, maternity and child welfare, immunisation, and the treatment of minor ailments, dental, eye and orthopaedic defects.

Hospitals. The hospital needs of the residents of the district, for all diseases apart from infectious disease, are provided by the Brecon War Memorial Hospital. A certain number of patients are also treated in the large hospitals situated in Cardiff and Swansea.

The arrangements for the treatment of infectious disease remain the same as in previous years. Merthyr Borough Council treat the patients from the district suffering from infectious disease and these are conveyed to Merthyr in ambulances maintained by Merthyr Borough Council. These arrangements are proving extremely satisfactory.

For the treatment of cases of smallpox arrangements have been made by the Welsh Board of Health for beds to be available at the Penrhys Hospital, Rhondda.

Disinfection. In the main the methods used for any disinfection required have been fumigation and spraying.

Section 3. Sanitary Circumstances.

Water Supplies.

During the year some further villages have been connected to the Regional Water Supply Scheme and are supplied with treated water. The villages now connected are as follows:-

Eastern Area. Talybont-on-Usk, Pencelly, Llanfrynach, Llansantffraed, Scethrog, Llanhamlach, Bwlch, Cathedine, Pennorth, Llangasty, Llanfihangel Talyllyn, Talyllyn, Llangorse, Llanwern, Tredomen, Llanfilo, Fellin-newydd, Llandefalle, Trawscoed, Felinfach, Talachddu, Llanddew, Llechfaen, Groesffordd.

Western Area. Sarnau, Llandyfaelog, Pwllgloyw, Lower Chapel, Fennifach, Cradoc, Battle, Pontfaen, Aberyscir, Aberbran, Soar, Llanfihangel Nant Bran, Llanspyddid.

Due to various delays, the new filtration works were not brought into use during the year, but it is anticipated that water will be available from this source early in 1958, subsequent to which a large extension of the area receiving treated water will take place.

A small scheme to supply the village of Llechach has been completed, and a start made on an extension to serve Warlo.

The proposals to supply the Borough Council with water in bulk have been extended to provide an emergency supply to make good the dry weather deficiency of their source, and work on this scheme is likely to commence early in 1958.

During the year 86 inspections of public and private supplies were carried out. The water from public supplies was not sampled chemically. 44 samples of public supplies were tested bacteriologically and of these 25 were satisfactory.

49 samples of private supplies were taken, and of these 25 were found to be satisfactory and 24 unsatisfactory. The majority of these samples were taken at the request of the Breconshire Agricultural Executive Committee in support of grant aided schemes for the provision of water to individual premises.

In all cases the Committee and the owners of the supplies were advised of the analyses.

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A large number of checking samples of the new water was also taken by Mr.Round.

Drainage and Sewerage. The schedule of sewerage schemes, for the larger villages was completed during the previous year and no new sewerage schemes were carried out during the year under review.

Properties connected to main drainage. The response of owners to connecting up drainage arrangements to the Council's new sewers has been quite satisfactory. During the year, the following number of properties were provided with main drainage.

Pencelly	0.
Trecastle	1.
Talybont	3.
Llanfrynach	0.
Pennorth and Scethrog	2.
Llanddew	0.
Sennybridge	0.
Cray	0.

These additional figures brought the total at the end of the year to:-

Llangorse	61.
Sennybridge	1.
Trecastle	70.
Talybont	84.
Llanfrynach	50.
Cray	13.
Llanddew	25.
Pennorth and Scethrog	20.
Pencelly	5.
Total	329.

Number of visits made by Public Health Inspector.....121.
Number of visits by Public Health Inspector to sewage works..61.

Public Cleansing. The collection and disposal of household refuse has been carried out during the year by direct labour under the supervision of the Chief Public Health Inspector. This comprehensive scheme provides for the removal of refuse from most of the larger villages weekly and, from the remaining villages, which are more scattered, fortnightly. The Council maintain three refuse disposal sites at Devynock, Trecastle and Llanfihangel Talyllyn. In order to prolong the length of usefulness of these sites and to reduce much duplication of mileage, particularly from the Eastern area, arrangements have been made for the disposal of refuse on a site in the Borough.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area. The sanitary inspection of the area was undertaken by the Chief Public Health Inspector, Mr.W.J.Rees, and the additional Public Health Inspector Mr.R.Taylor.
The following summary gives information relating to the work of the public health inspectors during the year.

Nuisances.

Number of complaints received	112.
Number of complaints investigated	112.
Number of premises inspected	112.
Number of premises revisited	25.
Number of preliminary notices served	8.
for (a) Structural defects	6.
(b) Sanitary defects	2.
Number of Statutory Notices served	0.

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Houses let in Lodgings. It is not considered that any of the houses in the district are of such a nature to require control under byelaws made under Section 6 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Offensive Trades. There are no offensive trades in the district.

Common Lodging Houses. There are no common lodging houses in the district.

Licensed Premises.
Number of visits made by Public Health Inspector.....43.
Number of defects found.....0.

Shops.
Number of inspections made.....42.

Factories. A complete survey of the factories in the district was carried out with the following results:-

Total number of factories.....18.
Total number of inspections made.....46.
Total number of defects found(insufficient sanitary conveniences)..1.
This defect was remedied.

Tents, Vans and Sheds.
Number of visits made.....64.

Eradication of Bed Bugs and Steps taken to combat infestation.

Any premises found as a result of inspection or complaint to be infested with bed bugs or other vermin is treated with D.D.T. preparations which have been found very successful.
No premises were found infested during the year.

Rodent Control. Mr. J.C. Reynolds, having been transferred to the Rates Department, has been replaced by Mr. I. Richards, who now carries out the work of rodent control. He is assisted in this work by Mr. John Price.

Details of the work carried out are given below:-

Number of premises inspected.....67.
Number of premises found infested.....61.
Number of agricultural premises inspected.....48.
Number of agricultural premises found infested.....17.
Number of premises treated by Rodent Officer.....61.
Number of premises treated by occupier.....0.
Number of premises treated by B.A.E.C.....6.

Sewers were treated during the year in the neighbourhood of infested houses.

Section 4. Housing. The following details show the position as it was at the end of the year.

Number of houses built by Council during the year.....20.
Number of houses built by private enterprise during the year.....4.
Number of inspections under Housing Act.....127.
Number of notices served.....58.

Improvement Grants, Housing Act, 1949. Twelve applications were made, all were approved during the year and grants made.

Rural Housing Survey. No comment is made on this Survey other than that it was completed in 1955,

Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 & 1932.

The district is being inspected regularly,and,as and when the occasion necessitates representation is made to the Council with a view to:-

(a) Serving of notices requiring the execution of works or
(b) The making of demolition or closing orders.

Demolition orders made.....12.
Undertakings accepted.....21.
Properties demolished.....4.
Closing orders served.....5.

Section 5. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

The number of food premises in the area was as follows:-

Retailers.....16.
Ice cream retailers.....8.
Bakers.....2.
Cafes.....6.
Hotels where meals are served.....12.

On the whole it can be said that the general standard of cleanliness observed was satisfactory.On no occasion has it been found necessary to serve a notice on any person engaged in the food trade.

There was no educational activity in connection with food in the district during the year but in the normal course of their duties the Public Health Inspectors,in their discussions with persons engaged in the food trade,emphasised the importance of the need for the highest standard of hygienic principle in the preparation and sale of foodstuffs to the public.

School Canteens.

Visits were made to and inspections made of school canteens and dining rooms.The attention of the Breconshire Education Committee was drawn to those premises which did not come up to the standard required by the Food Hygiene Regulations,1955,with a request that such improvements as were necessary to be carried out.

A disused classroom in the Council School,Llanfihangel Talyllyn was converted into a kitchen and canteen.

Meat Inspection.

Numbered of registered slaughterhouses in area.....1.
Number of inspections made to slaughterhouse.....89.

Number of various animals inspected.

Beasts.	Cows.	Sheep.	Calves.	Pigs.
16	65	447	17	126

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Meat affective with Diseases and condemned

	Disease	Livers Whole or Part	lbs	Lungs Whole or part	lbs	Heads No.	lbs	Total carcase & all organs No.	lbs.
Bovine	Cavernous) Angioma)	2	25¼	-	-	-	-	2	25¼
	Abcesses	2	26¾	1	11	-	-	3	27¾
	Distomatosis	7	85½	-	-	-	-	7	85½
	Echinococcus) Cysts)	-	-	4	30	-	-	4	30
	Cysts	2	27¾	1	½	-	-	3	28¼
	Flukes	3	28¾	-	-	-	-	3	28¾
	Actinomcosis	-	-	-	-	1	27½	1	27½
	Cirrhosis	1	¾	-	-	-	-	1	¾
Sheep	Inflamation	-	-	1	1¼	-	-	1	1¼
	Cirrhosis	4	6	-	-	-	-	4	6
	Strongyles	2	3¾	4	4¾	-	-	6	8½
	Cysts	-	-	2	3½	-	-	2	3½
Pigs	Milkspots	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
	Tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
	Caseated) Abscesses)	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
Totals		23	204½	14	52	3	29½	40	286

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep& Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	81	65	17	447	126	0
Number inspected	81	65	17	447	126	0
All diseases except Tuberculosis&cysticerci						
Whole carcases condemned	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	24	0	0	13	2	0
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease	29.6	-	-	2.9	1.6	0
Tuberculosis only						
Whole carcases condemned	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	0	0	0	0	1	0
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease	0	0	0	0.8	0	0

Cysticercis. No cases discovered.

All condemned meat from the Slaughterhouse is collected by a fertiliser making firm from Newport.

Disposal of Condemned Food.

All condemned foodstuffs excluding meat are disposed of by burying in one of the Council's refuse disposal sites.

None such foodstuffs was condemned during the year.

Milk. Considerable changes in the legislature governing the production of milk occurred by the coming into operation on October 1st. 1949 of the Food and Drugs(Milk and Dairies)Act,1944. Briefly under this Act the supervision of milk production on farms now passes to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Local Authorities are left with the control of distributors.

Number of samples taken during the year.....11.
Number of samples satisfactory.....11.
Number of samples unsatisfactory.....0.
24 samples were also examined for tuberculosis and brucelle abortus with negative results.

The result of all these samples were sent to the Milk Sub-Committee of the Ministry at Brecon.

Food Preparation Rooms (including bakehouses).

Number of inspections made.....33.

Ice Cream Premises.

Number of inspections made.....18.
Number of samples taken.....15.
All these samples were reported as satisfactory.
There are 8 premises registered for the sale of ice cream.

Preserved Food Premises.

Number of inspections made.....Nil.

Fish and Fried Fish Shops.

No premises are registered in the area for the sale of fried fish. Fish sold retail from motor vans is frequently inspected.

Section 6. Prevalence and Control of Infectious Disease.

The following cases of notifiable infectious disease were reported to me during the year.

Whooping Cough.....7.
Measles.....1.
Erysipelas.....1.

As will be seen the district was comparitively free from infectious disease during the year. No case was admitted to hospital and no death was due to this cause.

Venereal Disease. The County Council has an agreement with the General and Eye Hospital, Swansea, for the treatment of these cases. The tracing of contacts and the following up of defaulters is the responsibility of the County Council.

Tuberculosis. The following details show the position as regards tuberculosis in recent years.

Number of cases on the register at commencement of year.....40.
Number of fresh cases notified during the year.....7.
Number of cases removed from register
(a) Deaths.....1.
(b) Left district.....2.
(c) Disease arrested.....0.
(d) As non-tuberculous.....1.
Number of cases remaining on register at end of year.....43.

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The number of cases notified in recent years is shown below:-

1947.	1948.	1949.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.	1954.	1955.	1956.	1957.
5.	8.	7.	11.	13.	4.	3.	5.	13.	5.	7.

Diphtheria Immunisation. As a result of the new Health Act, the County Council are responsible for the immunisation of children against diphtheria and details for the district will be found in the annual report of the County Medical Officer.

There were no cases of diphtheria in the district during the year.

It is pleasing to see that the incidence of diphtheria continues to fall. The object of the immunisation campaign, however, remains the same: to secure the immunisation of not less than 75% of babies before their first birthday. It must be remembered that diphtheria still kills and that elimination of the disease is conditional upon the maintanance of an adequate level of immunisation. If parents leave their children unprotected there may be a return of diphtheria outbreaks.

Yours faithfully,

T.C.R.George,

Medical Officer of Health